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THE  
FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

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ADDRESS DELIVERED BY  
HON. FREDERICK C. HICKS  
OF LONG ISLAND

IN THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 14, 1917



WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1918

32539—18061

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To my friend

Dr. Franklin Jameson  
in appreciation of his  
assistance in the  
presentation of this  
work.

Fredrick C. Hicks





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FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

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## THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

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*"O brave flag, O bright flag, O flag to lead the free!  
The glory of thy silver stars,  
Engrailed in blue above the bars  
Of red for courage, white for truth,  
Has brought the world a second youth  
And draw a countless human host to follow after thee!"*

*First of the flags of earth to dare  
A heraldry so high.  
First of the flags of earth to bear  
The blazons of the sky;  
Long may thy constellation glow,  
Foretelling happy fate;  
Wider thy starry circle grow,  
And every star a State!*

*O bright flag, O brave flag, O flag to lead the free!  
The hand of God thy colors blent,  
And heaven to earth thy glory lent,  
To shield the weak, and guide the strong  
To make an end of human wrong,  
And drawn a hundred million hearts to follow after thee!*

HENRY VAN DYKE.





## FOREWORD.

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In submitting to my fellow countrymen this address on the flag, I desire to express to my colleagues in Congress my sincere appreciation of the cordial reception tendered its presentation and my thanks for their kind expressions of approval.

To my wife, whose deep interest in my work has been not only of untold material assistance, but a constant inspiration as well, these pages are affectionately dedicated.

I have endeavored to present a true history of the flag, so far as it has been possible to ascertain the facts from documents and records that I feel are authentic, and while I realize the shortcomings of this history, I trust that those who read these pages will credit me with writing with a pen unbiased by sentiment, locality or tradition. If this history will stimulate, even in the slightest degree, the patriotism of the reader or instill in the hearts of our people greater loyalty to our country and deeper reverence for our flag, I shall feel that the hours occupied in research and investigation will have been profitably spent.

The prestige of our flag was achieved by the practice of civic virtues and by the steadfast adherence to the principles of enlightened democracy. I speed this message on its way in the hope that it may encourage the study of our heroic past among the youth of the land and help to teach them the lessons of true citizenship, which gave birth to our Republic and by which it shall be preserved in all its vigor and splendor.

Patriotism is more than a sentiment; loyalty is more than an expression. The one is the acceptance of the duties—absolute and universal—which every citizen owes his country; the other the determination—sincere and unfaltering—to perform those duties irrespective of the sacrifice.

Piercing the clouds of war that enshroud the civilized world, there shines forth in the effulgent light of freedom and justice, the emblem of the hopes, the ideals and the achievements of America, the standard of honor and of victory, the

*FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES.*

*Frederick C. Hicker*

## FLAGS—THE SYMBOLS OF IDEALS.

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"In 1777, upon the 14th of June, the Congress of the Colonies assembled and ordained this glorious National Flag which now we hold and defend, and advanced it full high before God and all men as the Flag of Liberty. It was no holiday flag, gorgeously emblazoned for gayety or vanity. It was a solemn national signal. When that banner first unrolled to the sun it was the symbol of all those holy truths and purposes which brought together the Colonial American Congress."

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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"Flags symbolize the noble aspirations and glorious achievements of the human race; they epitomize the romance of history; they incarnate the chivalry of the ages. Their origin is divinity itself, for when at the beginning of recorded time Jehovah made a covenant with man, promising that never again would He send the waters to cover the face of the earth and destroy all flesh, He unfurled the first flag—the multihued banner of the rainbow—which He set in the clouds as a symbol of security and an assurance to all future generations of His watchful care. And since that day man has in his finite way employed his earthly banners as emblems of faith, of hope, and of high resolve.

"Around the bits of varicolored bunting which the people of each land nominate as a national flag there cluster thoughts of loyalty, of patriotism and of personal sacrifice, which have enabled the world to move forward, from the days when each individual struggled for himself alone, like other wild animals of plain and mountain side, until through community of interests and unity of effort, mankind has been enabled to rear the splendid structure of twentieth-century civilization."

GILBERT H. GROSVENOR.  
32539—18061

## THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES.

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The SPEAKER. Under a special order of the House the gentleman from New York [Mr. Hicks] is permitted to address the House for one hour on the American Flag.

Mr. HICKS. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, on this, the one hundred and fortieth anniversary of the ordination of the Stars and Stripes by the Continental Congress, I have thought it fitting and proper to portray its wondrous history. The flag held in reverence by 100,000,000 of our people is a modern standard. There are no myths or legends associated with its origin; it tells no story of crushed liberties or violated rights; it sprang neither from the sorrows of the oppressed nor the sufferings of the conquered. Its majestic beauty expresses the independence of a thoughtful, courageous, conscientious people; the faith, the lofty aspirations and the high ideals of representative democracy; the advance of a new Nation dedicated to liberty, to law, to justice and to human rights.

The flag of America does more than proclaim mere power or acclaim a great and glorious history. Its rippling folds wave a benediction to the yesterdays of accomplishment and beckon the to-morrows of progress with hope and confidence; it heralds the noble purposes of a mighty people and carries a message of hope and inspiration to all mankind. Its glowing splendor appeals to us to demand international justice and arbitration; it commands us to self-sacrifice, and to universal obligation of service which alone can maintain equality of rights and fullness of opportunity in our Republic. Its stars and its stripes voice the spirit of America calling to a Nation of indomitable courage and infinite possibilities to live the tenets of Christianity, to teach the gospel of work and usefulness, to advance education, to demand purity of thought and action in public life and to protect the liberties of free government from the aggressions of despotic power. This is the call of the flag of the Union in this hour of crisis and turmoil, when civilization and the laws of nations and of humanity are being engulfed in the maelstrom of death and destruction. In the words of Robert G. Ingersoll—

The flag for which the heroes fought, for which they died, is the symbol of all we are, of all we hope to be. It is the emblem of equal rights. It means universal education—light for every mind, knowledge for every child. It means that it is the duty of every citizen to bear

his share of the public burden. It means that all distinctions based on birth or blood have perished from our laws; that our Government shall stand between capital and labor, between the weak and the strong, between the individual and the corporation, between want and wealth and give the guaranty of simple justice to each and all. That flag is the emblem of a supreme will of a Nation's power. Beneath its folds the weakest must be protected and the strongest must obey. It shields and canopies alike the loftiest mansion and the rudest hut. That flag was given to the air in the Revolution's darkest days. It represents the sufferings of the past, the glories yet to be, and, like the bow of heaven, it is the child of storm and sun.

While no authentic history prevails relating to the banners and standards used by the peoples of remote antiquity, it is probable that as soon as men began to form themselves into tribes and clans or unite for a common purpose, some symbol was used to express the common sentiment. Among many ancient ruins, representations of the objects used as ensigns have been discovered. History, both sacred and profane, records the use of standards or banners by the armies of all nations in the distant past. From the sculptures and paintings on the monuments of Egypt, it is evident that the use of standards and flags was common in the Valley of the Nile thousands of years before the Christian era. It was the custom among the Egyptians for each battalion to carry a distinguishing emblem representing some sacred object, or a tablet bearing a name or device. Excavations among the ruins of the Assyrian civilization prove that these peoples were also accustomed to the use of standards. The ancient Hebrews had banners for the various tribes and in the Old Testament, Book of Numbers, Chapter I, we find: "And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp and every man by his own standard." In Chapter II: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, 'Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house \* \* \*'"

The Persians at the time of Cyrus used as their standard a white flag on which was displayed a golden eagle. The Romans had many standards and they were held in the greatest reverence by the people, who in the temples of the Eternal City guarded these emblems of their sovereignty with religious veneration. In primitive times each company of the army bore a pole with a bundle of hay attached. Later the figure of a horse, a bear, a wolf, or other tribal emblem was substituted. In the time of Marius a silver eagle, with spreading wings and with claws grasping the thunderbolts of Jove, was the emblem of the Roman Republic. This device, so common in various forms in



countries of modern Europe, was taken from the Etruscans, who were the first to adopt it as the symbol of royal power. The Roman standards changed with their conquests and each emperor displayed new emblems. Augustus adopted a globe to symbolize his rule over the world, and Constantine the cross to commemorate his vision.

The cities of Greece also used standards in their military campaigns, carrying on their staffs various devices and emblems. Sometimes it was a piece of armor attached to a spear, or an initial letter, or an emblem of the gods. According to Homer, Agamemnon raised a purple veil to rally his soldiers. During the Middle Ages, and notably in the crusades, banners and emblems of every description roused the mail-clad warriors in defense of the cross against the crescent.

From ancient times the dragon has been a favorite emblem for standards, especially among eastern nations. It was adopted by the Romans as the standard of their cohorts and was probably the device on the banner of Harold at the Battle of Hastings, the Saxons having for many centuries used the dragon symbol. Richard Cœur de Lion in 1190, it is maintained, adopted the legend of St. George and the dragon to typify his exploits in the crusades "to the terror of the heathen beyond the sea." Henry III, in 1264, at the Battle of Lewes, fought under the dragon; and Edward III, at the Battle of Crecy in 1346, according to an old writer, displayed a standard "with a dragon of red silk adorned and beaten with fair lilies of gold." The word "ancient" was formerly frequently used to denote an ensign or standard bearer and in Shakespeare's *Othello*, Cassio, in speaking of Iago, says, "the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient."

Medieval flags were of various shapes, some long and pointed, some square and others ending in two or more points. The banner which the Pope sent Charlemagne was oblong with three points. The standards of Henry VIII of England were long streamers rather than flags as we know them. Time does not permit the description of all these emblems, and they have no relation to the flag that floats over us to-day, except as an illustration, showing that through all ages and among all races of humanity, some flag has been used as an emblem to inspire men's hearts with confidence, hope and reverence.

The flags used by the American Colonies prior to the Revolution were naturally those of England, though there were some exceptions, for while the colonists considered themselves Englishmen, the ties between them and the mother country did not prevent them from showing their independence.

The ancient standard of England, the cross of St. George, a white flag with a rectangular red cross extending its entire length and breadth, was the emblem usually carried by the English soldiery as early as the fourteenth century, though "first used by King Richard I as the British ensign." It continued as the national flag until 1606, when James I by proclamation united it with the cross of St. Andrew, a blue flag with a diagonal white cross extending from corner to corner. This flag, intended to represent the union of Scotland and England, was called the "King's colors" or "Union" flag, and was to be displayed from the maintops of all British vessels. In addition, ships were to fly from their foretops, flags to designate the part of the kingdom from which they came; those from south Britain—England—carrying the St. George cross and those hailing from north Britain—Scotland—the cross of St. Andrew. It is presumed that, as the *Mayflower* belonged to south Britain, the flags under which our Pilgrim fathers sailed on their memorable voyage were the King's colors and the banner of St. George. The same inference can be drawn in reference to the early voyages to the southern colonies.

As the King's colors had been prescribed for ships only, the flag of St. George's cross continued to be used by English subjects on land. On the death of Charles I, in 1649, the union between Scotland and England was dissolved, and in 1651 the St. George's cross was adopted by the Commonwealth Parliament as the national standard of England. While the Union flag again came into use upon the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, under Charles II, it is probable that the St. George's cross flag, with occasional variations, was the one displayed in the American Colonies until 1707, when Parliament ratified the union of Scotland and England. Under this act the "Union" flag of James I, the "King's colors," was ordained as the banner for all subjects of the British realm "both at sea and land." The famous "meteor flag of England" was a modification of the King's colors, being a red ensign with the device of the crosses in the canton. As Ireland was not incorporated into the British Kingdom until 1801, at which time the cross of St. Patrick—a red diagonal saltier on a white ground—was conjoined with the other two, the present ensign of Great Britain was never used by the American Colonies.

It may be of interest to note other flags which were flown on American soil in the days of its discovery and early settlement. The first flag planted upon our shores, if we exclude the possibility of the Norsemen having reached our continent, was that of Spain, a banner with four quarters, two of which were red,

embellished with golden castles, and two white, emblazoned with red lions. This was the standard of Spain during most of the period of her conquests. Columbus also bore a personal flag, which had been presented to him by Queen Isabella, consisting of a white ensign with a green cross, having on either side the letters F-Y surmounted by golden crowns. It is stated that Cabot, by reason of his being a Venetian, upon one of his expeditions, in addition to the flag of England, whose commission he bore, carried the banner of his native city. This was a scarlet ensign bordered by a broad band of blue, impaled by the winged lion of St. Mark holding a cross in his right paw.

The flag of France—what hallowed associations cluster around that noble banner, as we remember the heroism, the sacrifice and the loyalty of France in the dark days of our struggle for liberty. Washington declared that the remembrance of the generosity of France "must inspire every citizen of the States with sentiments of the most unalterable gratitude." The memories of 150 years ago recall the glories of victory, when the flag of France and the new-born standard of America waved side by side in the cause of human freedom. Inspired by that heroic past and in the spirit of Washington and Lafayette and the patriots of our Revolution, we extend our hand of sympathy and friendship and love to our sister Republic across the seas, in this hour of her affliction. The laurel wreaths of triumph, faded but not forgotten in the flight of years, will again entwine the flags of America and France, as they are carried onward to victory and to glory.

The flag Jacques Cartier planted on the shores of the New World in 1534 was a blue ensign emblazoned with the golden fleur-de-lis of France. Later a white flag was adopted by the Huguenot party but it is probable that the Bourbon flag—the fleur-de-lis emblem—floated over the vast territory occupied by the French. Henry Hudson brought the Dutch flag to America when the *Half Moon* sailed into New York Harbor in 1609. It was a flag with three equal horizontal stripes, orange, white, and blue, with the letters "A. O. C.," standing for the Dutch name of the East India Co. of Amsterdam—then in control of maritime affairs of the Netherlands—in the middle of the white stripe. In 1621, when the Dutch West India Co. came into power, the letters "A. O. C." were replaced by the letters "G. W. C." In 1650 the orange stripe was changed to red, the design of the present flag, and this banner waved over the future metropolis of the world until it was supplanted by the flag of St. George's cross. The flag of Sweden—a yellow cross on a blue field—also has a place in our history, as that nation for a number of years maintained settlements on the banks of the Delaware River.

In the records of Massachusetts, as early as 1634, mention is made of the use of the flag of St. George's cross. In 1643, a confederacy known as the United Colonies of New England was formed, but it was not until 1686 that a flag was adopted, being the cross of St. George with the initials "J. R." surmounted by a crown at the intersection of the two bars of the cross. This flag was modified and in the design most generally used had a red field, with the cross of St. George in the upper corner next the mast. A tree or a globe was usually represented in the upper canton next the staff. This was the famous New England flag. Occasionally the field was blue, and this later design is the flag supposed to have been used at Bunker Hill.

Long before the smoldering embers of revolt blazed into the fires of the Revolution, nearly every colony had adopted a flag of its own. The Massachusetts flag bore a pine tree; South Carolina displayed a rattlesnake; New York had a white flag with a black beaver, symbolical of her industry and the wealth of the fur trade; and Rhode Island a white flag with a blue anchor and the word "Hope" upon it. The growing discontent of the Colonies was productive of numerous devices for flags and banners, the larger portion inscribed with mottoes more or less defiant of British authority. In 1774, at Taunton, Mass., a "union" flag was raised, bearing the words, "Liberty or Death." In New York in 1775 a "union" flag with a red field, charged with the inscription, "George Rex and the Liberties of America," was displayed. Other devices were employed, the most famous being the pine-tree flag, a white ensign with the motto "An appeal to Heaven" above a green pine tree, and the rattlesnake flag, a yellow banner bearing the significant words, "Don't Tread on Me," beneath a coiled snake.

The Massachusetts cruisers frequently carried a flag which combined the pine tree and rattlesnake emblems in one design, the snake being coiled at the roots of the tree. Many privateers adopted a device consisting of a mailed hand grasping a bundle of thirteen arrows. The most famous flag used in the South at the beginning of the Revolution was one designed by Col. Moultrie, of South Carolina. It was a blue ensign with a white crescent in the upper corner near the staff. This was the flag which Sergt. Jasper rescued so gallantly when the fort of palmetto logs on Sullivan's Island was attacked by the British on June 28, 1776. It was under this flag that the Declaration of Independence was read to the citizens of Charleston on August 5, 1776. The word "Liberty" was frequently inscribed upon it. When South Carolina officially adopted a State flag, she took this famous blue banner with its white crescent,



and in recognition of the services rendered by the palmetto logs, placed the figure of a palmetto tree in the center of the field.

While some doubt exists as to whether a standard was carried at Concord and Lexington, it is asserted by many authorities that Capt. Nathaniel Page, a minute man of Bedford, Mass., was flag bearer of his company at Concord and that his banner had a maroon ground, upon which was described in silver, an armored, outstretched hand grasping a sword, with the inscription in a scroll of gold, "Vince aut morire," signifying "Conquer or die." Three silver disks were also described upon it. I feel we can safely assume that it was this flag, "the most precious memorial of its kind of which we have any knowledge," that waved over the "embattled farmers" at Concord, April 19, 1775, when in response to the midnight alarm of Paul Revere, they "fired the shot heard round the world."

Many writers assert that it is doubtful whether the patriots at Bunker Hill were marshaled under any flag. Benson J. Lossing, however, in his *Field Book of the Revolution*, states that the standard raised on that fateful Saturday, was the time-honored New England flag, with its field blue instead of red. In the upper quarter was St. George's cross and in the upper canton the design of a pine tree was shown. Mr. Botta, a Revolutionary historian, was evidently of the opinion that the pine-tree flag was carried, for in his account of the battle he states that Gen. Warren in endeavoring to rally his men, reminded them of the motto inscribed on their banners, "An appeal to Heaven." Shortly after the Battle of Bunker Hill, Gen. Putnam unfurled at Cambridge a flag with a red ground, having on one side the Connecticut motto, "He who transplanted us will sustain us," and on the reverse side a pine tree with the motto, "An appeal to Heaven."

While the various forerunners of the American flag are inseparably associated with its history, they afford little or no clue to the origin of the Stars and Stripes. It has been conjectured that the stripes as an emblem of unity may have been suggested by the flag of the Netherlands, where for many years the combination of stripes had been used to symbolize the union of the Dutch Republic. As early as 1704 the flag used by the Honorable East India Co. of England, strangely enough, consisted of thirteen red and white stripes with the cross of St. George in the canton. Another theory is, that as the different grades in the ununiformed Continental Army were distinguished by stripes or ribbons, these distinguishing marks suggested the stripes in the flag. It has been frequently asserted, though without tangible evidence, that the stripes as well as the stars

on his own coat of arms, may have suggested the design to Washington.

One of the earliest instances of the use of the thirteen stripes upon an American flag is found in the banner of the Philadelphia Light Horse Troop. This standard was presented to the company by Abram Markoe in 1775 and is known as the Markoe flag. It was made of yellow silk and both sides were alike. In the center was an armorial design, above which were the letters "L. H." and below the words, "For these we strive." The striking feature of this flag is the representation of thirteen stripes, alternate blue and silver, placed in the upper corner next the staff. As Gen. Washington, when en route to take command of the Continental Army at Cambridge in 1775, was escorted from Philadelphia to New York by this troop, he was undoubtedly familiar with the standard it carried, and the significance of the stripes as indicative of the union between the Colonies, may have suggested the flag raised over his headquarters six months later. It is claimed that the Markoe banner was carried in the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine and Germantown.

Reference should also be made to the two banners of the Tallmadge Dragoons, one pink and the other blue. The first has a pink field, in the center of which is a blue disk with silver wings. From the disk ten golden thunderbolts radiate like the sun's rays. Under this device is a silver scroll with the motto in black letters, "PAT<sup>A</sup> CONCITA FULM<sup>NT</sup> NATL." The canton, bordered by a silver thread, has six stripes of white ribbon, making with the background thirteen pink and white stripes. The blue standard has the same device and motto and in addition, above the disk in a scroll of gold, the inscription, "2d Regt. Lt. Dragoons." The canton is edged with a gold line and has seven gold stripes painted on the blue silk, which, with the background, gives the combination of thirteen stripes, alternate blue and gold.

While having no bearing on the design of the Stars and Stripes, it may be of interest to note another flag, the Eutaw flag, to which is attached a sentimental story. Col. William Washington, a kinsman of Gen. Washington, in 1780 was ordered to Charleston, S. C., and while there fell in love with a Miss Elliot. Learning one day, when the colonel was paying her a visit, that his troop was without a flag, Miss Elliot, so it is related, with her scissors cut off a portion of a large damask curtain, which she afterward fringed and attached to a curtain pole and presented to him for a standard. This flag was carried in the Battle of Cowpens and at Eutaw Springs and is now the property of the Washington Light Infantry, of Charleston.

Another flag which has a romantic history is Pulaski's banner, now in the possession of the Maryland Historical Society. Count Pulaski, the son of a Polish nobleman, was a soldier of fortune who, at the age of 24, found himself outlawed and his estates confiscated. At the beginning of the Revolution he volunteered in the American Army and in 1778 was commissioned an officer in the cavalry force. Congress authorized him to raise what is known as Pulaski's Legion and this body of troops was recruited in the summer of 1778. The patriotic women of Baltimore presented the count with the banner which had been made by the Moravian Single Sisters of Bethlehem, Pa. It is of yellow silk, with the letters "U. S." in the center and in a circle around them the words, in Latin, "Union makes valor." On the reverse side, surrounding an eye, is the motto, also in Latin, "No other governs." This banner was carried in the Battle of Savannah, when Pulaski commanded both the American and the French cavalry.

The flag of Proctor's brigade, of Westmoreland, Pa., should also be mentioned. It is a crimson flag, cantoned with the British union jack. In the center of the field a coiled rattlesnake with thirteen rattles is represented, with the familiar words, "Don't Tread on Me." This banner belonged to a company of Pennsylvania patriots, organized in pursuance to a set of resolutions adopted at Hannastown, then the county seat of Westmoreland County, and it was carried in the Battle of Trenton. At the Battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776, the American patriots fought under a banner made of red damask on which was the word "Liberty."

The Second New Hampshire Regiment had a buff flag, in the center of which was a golden disk with thirteen rays surrounded by a chain of thirteen links. The disk bore the motto, "We are one." In the canton were two crosses somewhat similar to the king's colors. Another emblem expressing the spirit of unity between the Colonies, was a flag with thirteen mailed hands grasping thirteen links of a chain arranged in a circle. Reference should also be made to a banner known as the "Flag of the Bucks of America," a yellow flag with a pine tree in the center. Beneath the branches of the tree stands a deer. The canton is blue on which thirteen yellow stars are painted. It is asserted, that this flag was carried in the Revolution by a regiment of Massachusetts colored troops.

In addition to these flags there was the Three County Troop flag of Massachusetts—an earlier banner—carried in King Philip's war by a body of cavalry organized in the counties of Essex, Suffolk and Middlesex. There was also the Bennington flag carried by the Green Mountain boys at the Battle of Ben-



nington, August 16, 1777. This flag had seven white and six red stripes, with a canton of blue, on which were thirteen stars, one in each of the two upper corners and eleven arranged in a half circle over the figures 76. There was also the flag of the First Pennsylvania Rifles, described as having "a deep green ground, the device of a tiger, partly inclosed by toils, attempting the pass defended by a hunter with a spear, on a crimson field." Above the lion were the initials, "P. M. R.," while below was the motto "Domari nolo." This banner was carried at Trenton, Brandywine, Mounmouth and Yorktown.

The origin of the first flag distinctly colonial and representing a union of the Colonies is shrouded in mystery. In October, 1775, the Continental Congress, then in session in Philadelphia, sent a committee to Cambridge to confer with Washington on military matters. It has been stated that this committee suggested the design for a flag, but there are no records to substantiate the assertion. Neither in Washington's correspondence nor in the report of the committee to Congress is there any reference to a new flag. Who designed the flag which Washington raised at Cambridge on January 2, 1776, is not known, but there and then were displayed the stripes emblematic of the union of the Colonies. In the words of Washington, "We hoisted the Union flag in compliment to the United Colonies." The standard consisted of thirteen red and white stripes, with the "union" or "King's colors" in the canton—the familiar combination of the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew. It was a singular flag, half American and half British, for while the Colonies still acknowledged their allegiance to England they were determined that their rights should be respected even at the point of the sword. In the fall of 1775 the Continental Navy was established and the several ships placed in commission probably carried as their ensign the "union" or Cambridge flag.

It was not until the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, that a complete separation was decided upon, so the Cambridge flag with its thirteen stripes represented the union of the Colonies in their protest against taxation without representation, while the union of crosses acknowledged their allegiance to the mother country. This flag was variously designated as the union flag, the grand union flag, Congress colors, and the grand striped flag, but is now referred to as the Cambridge flag, and it seems most probable that the banner officially adopted in 1777 was copied, at least so far as the stripes are concerned, from the flag Washington unfurled the year previous.

The first authoritative action to establish a flag for a new sovereignty is fraught with particular interest and it is regrettable that we know so little as to the origin of the Stars and Stripes.

While the Cambridge flag had the thirteen stripes, there is no evidence that any flag bearing the union of stars had been in public use prior to the resolution of 1777 and it will probably never be known who designed or suggested this beautiful, distinctive and emblematic feature of our banner. The records of Congress are silent upon the subject and no authentic reference to it has ever been discovered in the correspondence, papers or diaries which have been examined. It is claimed in popular tradition that the honor of making the first flag combining the Stars and Stripes belongs to Betsy Ross, a Quaker upholsteress and flag maker who resided in Arch Street, Philadelphia. It is asserted by her descendants that Congress appointed a committee composed of Gen. Washington, Robert Morris, and George Ross, the latter an uncle of Mrs. Ross's late husband, who called upon her in May or June, 1776, and commissioned her to make a flag from an imperfectly drawn design embodying the stripes and the union of thirteen six-pointed stars.

As the six-pointed stars were peculiar to the British, it is said Mrs. Ross suggested that a star of five points would be more symmetrical and appropriate and the committee at once adopted the new design. While this story is interesting and I hope may be well founded, there is however little evidence to support it. It rests on the traditions of the Ross family and upon affidavits made by Mrs. Ross's descendants as to their understanding of the particulars as related by Mrs. Ross herself, or by those to whom she told the story. Unfortunately the annals of Congress make no reference to the appointment of a flag committee and yet so important a matter must have been under consideration previous to the final adoption of the flag. In Washington's correspondence and writings no mention is made of a visit to Mrs. Ross's house or when or by whom the first flag was made. Neither do any of the historians of the Revolutionary period or any contemporaneous writers, so far as I have been able to discover, throw light upon the subject. The principal argument against the story has been that the flag evidently was not used during any portion of 1776 and was not adopted until a year after Mrs. Ross is supposed to have made it. It is further stated by those who discredit the story that Washington when he caused the Declaration of Independence to be read to his troops in New York, on July 10, 1776, would have raised this new flag, had such a flag been in existence, instead of the Cambridge banner, which was unfurled. Those who have had experience in congressional matters will not be convinced by the argument of delay in not adopting the new flag at once, and had Mrs. Ross made the flag it is not probable that Washington or anyone else would have used it until Congress had approved it.

While the official records of the time offer no evidence of the use of the Stars and Stripes previous to 1777, some writers point to the historical paintings of Trumbull, Leutze and Peale as furnishing proofs of its earlier adoption. Where the flag appears in their pictures it is undoubtedly a case of anachronism and not an historical fact. In Leutze's painting of "Washington Crossing the Delaware" the display of the colors is most probably an instance of "artists' license."

Whatever uncertainty may exist as to the true origin of the Stars and Stripes, we know that Congress, on June 14, 1777, adopted the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the flag of the 13 United States be 13 stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be 13 stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.

This is the first legislative action of which there is any record establishing a national flag for the sovereign United States of America, declared independent July 4, 1776, and proclaiming the official birth of a new constellation as the symbol of their Union. Thus were born the Stars and Stripes, which through all the ages shall be the emblem of liberty and justice for all mankind. In the words of the late Mr. Justice Harlan of the Supreme Court:

To every true American the flag is the symbol of the Nation's power, the emblem of freedom in its truest, best sense. It is not extravagant to say that to all lovers of the country it signifies government resting on the consent of the governed, liberty regulated by law; the protection of the weak against the exercise of arbitrary power; and absolute safety for free institutions against foreign aggression.

The following description has frequently been referred to as a quotation from Washington's writings but I have been unable to verify it and question its authenticity.

We take the star from heaven, the red from the mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty.

It has been said that—

Every nation has its symbolic ensign in their banners. Our fathers chose the Stars and Stripes, the red telling of the blood shed by them for their country, the blue of the heavens and their protection, and the stars of the separate States embodied in one nationality, *E pluribus unum*. The stars of the new flag represent a constellation of States rising in the west. The idea was taken from the constellation Lyra, which in the hands of Orpheus signified harmony. The blue of the field was taken from the edges of the Covenanter's banner in Scotland, significant also of the league and covenant of the United Colonies against oppression, incidentally involving the virtues of vigilance, perseverance, and justice. The stars were disposed in a circle, symbolizing the perpetuity of the Union, the ring like the circling serpent of the Egyptians signifying eternity.

What eloquence do the stars breathe when their full significance is known: A new constellation, union; perpetuity; a covenant against oppression; justice, equality, subordination, courage, and purity.

I doubt if these poetic and fanciful descriptions, however, have any basis other than the imagination of the writer.

While the flag was adopted June 14, 1777, it was not until September 3 following that Congress officially promulgated the design. The honor of first displaying the Stars and Stripes in battle belongs to the State of New York, when on August 3, 1777, an improvised flag was raised on the northeast bastion of old Fort Stanwix, or Schuyler as it was sometimes called, the site of the present city of Rome. Anticipating an attack by the British, a garrison of some 550 soldiers, under the command of Col. Peter Gansevoort, jr., with Lieut. Col. Marinus Willett second in command, had been placed in the fort. On August 2, the garrison was reinforced by about two hundred men of the Ninth Massachusetts Regiment, led by Lieut. Col. Mellon. This detachment brought news of the recently enacted flag statute, and as the garrison was without a standard the fort was ransacked for material of which to make the new flag. According to accounts, shirts were cut up to form the white stripes, a woman's petticoat supplied the red, while the blue ground for the stars was taken from a cloak belonging to Capt. Abraham Swartwort, of Dutchess County, who was then in the fort. This account is confirmed in part by a letter from Col. Swartwort to his commanding officer, asking for an order on the paymaster to reimburse him for the loss of his cloak. The narrative of Col. Willett, however, gives a somewhat different version of the story. He says:

The white stripes were cut out of ammunition shirts, the blue out of the camlet cloak taken from the enemy at Peekskill, while the red stripes were made of different pieces of stuff procured from one and another of the expedition.

Howsoever the flag was made, it was the Stars and Stripes that floated over the brave Americans from August 3 to August 22, when the siege was raised. John Fiske, the eminent historian, further substantiates the claim that to New York belongs the honor of having first unfurled the Stars and Stripes in battle when he says, speaking of the flag:

Hastily extemporized out of a white shirt and an old blue jacket and some strips of red cloth from the petticoat of a soldier's wife, this was the first American flag with Stars and Stripes that was ever hoisted.

Delaware also claims the distinction, maintaining that the flag was first raised in battle at Cooch's bridge, near Wilmington, on September 3, 1777. The claim is based on the presumption that the American forces had a flag at that time, and even though they had, this skirmish took place a month after the flag on Fort Stanwix had been unfurled to the breeze. One of



the local Delaware historians, Judge Conrad, defeats his own contention when he says:

On August 2, 1777, a short skirmish or sally occurred at Fort Schuyler, N. Y., in which the Americans floated a rudely devised flag, intended to represent the ideas embodied in the resolve of Congress, and all historians agree that the flag floated on that occasion was merely an improvised one, and in no sense a complete and regular flag of the United States.

The absurdity of Mr. Conrad's theory is dismissed by Mr. Edward H. Hall, secretary of the American Scenic and Historical Preservation Society, who says:

Thus the 20 days' siege at Fort Schuyler, so courageously and successfully resisted, is dismissed by Mr. Conrad as a short skirmish or sally, and the fine distinction drawn between a heroic siege, with all its terrors of possible starvation and barbarous massacre, and a morning's skirmish at Cooch's bridge between two small bodies of troops formally drawn up in line of battle. I do not know of any historian who says that the Fort Schuyler flag was not "complete," although they do agree that it was improvised.

The Stars and Stripes first went into action upon the sea on September 4, 1777, and the victory won at the close of that day was an auspicious augury for the triumphs and the glories which were to shed their luster on the American Navy in the years to follow. To Capt. Thompson belongs this honor. He records the engagement: "We up sails, out guns, hoisted continental colors and bid them strike to the thirteen United States." His reference to the continental colors was undoubtedly an error, due to the fact that the new flag had only just come into use.

The Stars and Stripes were carried in the Battle of the Brandywine September 11, 1777; they waved in triumph over the victorious field of Saratoga and cheered the ragged patriots of Washington's army amid their sufferings around the camp fires at Valley Forge. Beneath their folds, Cornwallis surrendered his sword at Yorktown, October 19, 1781. They floated over New York when the British evacuated the city November 25, 1783, and roused the patriotism of our soldiers during the later days of the Revolution, as the immortal Washington marched onward to undying fame.

Soon after its adoption the new flag was hoisted on the naval vessels of the United States. It has been stated that the Naval Committee of Congress presented to John Paul Jones the first official flag of the United States ever made but there is no official record to confirm this statement. Buell, in his life of Paul Jones, states that the captain displayed the Stars and Stripes on the *Ranger*, then being fitted up at Portsmouth, on the 4th of July, 1777. The *Ranger*, however, did not go to sea until No-



vember 1. With Jones in command—his commission was issued on the same day the flag was established—the *Ranger* reached Quiberon Bay, France, about December 1, 1777, and on February 14, 1778, her flag received the first salute ever paid the United States flag by a foreign power. No less an authority than John Adams has stated that the first American vessel to obtain a foreign salute for the flag, was the *Andrea Doria* in the Dutch West Indies, in November, 1776. This ship, however, carried only a continental ensign, probably the Cambridge flag, which was never legalized or officially established by the Continental Congress and while the salute was undoubtedly given, even though it was afterwards disavowed, it was not the national ensign which the French commander saluted, for the West Indies incident occurred eight months before the Stars and Stripes existed. The confusion in this case, as in many others pertaining to the flag, is due to the uncertainty as to what was meant by the term "American flag."

A question has been raised as to the exact date on which Jones raised the flag on the *Ranger*, some old reports of the incident stating that it was July 12. In De Koven's "Life and Letters of John Paul Jones," doubt is expressed about the claim made by Buell for Jones in connection with the raising of the flag on the *Ranger* in July, 1777, for he says:

But the honor of first unfurling the Stars and Stripes from a ship of war, which has been claimed for Jones, is not supported by historical evidence. If he had been lucky enough to have had the opportunity of first unfurling the new national banner from the *Ranger*, it is not to be believed that he would have omitted to mention the fact.

As there has been much controversy over the first display of the flag from a warship, it is of interest to note the several claims that have been advanced for this honor. In Griffin's "History of Commodore Barry" there is this reference to the flag:

Under this flag Hopkins was the first to get to sea, and Barry's *Lexington*, bearing it, was the first to cause the British flag to surrender to the flag of Washington.

And again:

His cruiser (the *Lexington*) was the first Union flag to make the first capture that was first reported to the Marine Committee of Congress.

John Fiske, in speaking of the *Lexington's* capture of the British vessel *Edward* on April 7, 1776, says:

This was the first capture of a British warship by an American.

As this exploit occurred over a year before the Stars and Stripes were officially adopted, the flag borne by Barry was not the national ensign. The "Union" flag referred to by Griffin

was the Cambridge standard, and other accounts bear out the assumption that Barry's flag on the *Lexington* was the flag which Washington unfurled at Cambridge. This is further confirmed by Preble in his history when he says:

The *Lexington* was the first vessel that bore the Continental flag to victory on the ocean.

Capt. Manley's name has also been mentioned for the honor, and while it is true that his ship, the *Lee*, captured the British vessel *Nancy* in October or November, 1775, the flag that waved from the peak of the *Lee* was undoubtedly the famous "Pine Tree" emblem, with its motto "An appeal to Heaven," for the *Lee* was one of six ships under the command of Gen. Washington which at that time carried this ensign. One writer, however, speaks "of a flag being made in 1775 by a patriotic vessel owner of Massachusetts, having thirteen white stars in a blue union, the body of the flag being white, with an anchor upon it having over the top the word 'Hope.' It was hoisted on the armed schooner *Lee*, Capt. John Manley." This same author states that "either this or the stars on the Washington book plate in the absence of any record may be taken as reasons for the adoption of the stars in the union." I have been unable to substantiate the statement made by this historian that the thirteen stars were displayed previous to 1777, and as Rhode Island had already adopted the design of the anchor surmounted by the word "Hope," it is not probable that a shipowner of Massachusetts would have used, even in part, the emblem of a rival colony.

It is only fair to state that some historians maintain that the colonial flag of Rhode Island was frequently designated by a canton of blue, on which were displayed thirteen white stars. If such were the case, this striking design may have been the source for the adoption of the stars in our national ensign, but I can find no evidence on the subject. There does seem to be substantial reason to believe, however, that the flag carried by the First Rhode Island Regiment at the Battle of the Brandywine and during the siege of Yorktown was similar to the flag just described, with the exception that the stars were gold. As these engagements took place after the adoption of the Stars and Stripes, they furnish no proof of the earlier use of the stars.

John Paul Jones asserted that he was the first to raise the flag. "It was my fortune to hoist myself the flag of America," and this is confirmed by evidence which shows that during the winter of 1775-76, while the *Alfred* was lying at anchor at Philadelphia, Commander Hopkins was placed in command of the newly commissioned ship. When he reached the deck of the *Alfred*, Jones, then a lieutenant, raised the flag in

honor of the commander. But this American flag hoisted by Jones, and which the patriots of Philadelphia cheered on that wintry day, was probably the striped "Union" flag which Washington displayed over his headquarters at Cambridge. From the fact that this flag was carried by all ships under the control of the Continental Congress it is also frequently referred to as the "Congress colors." It seems evident that the *Alfred* carried at the main mast the famous rattlesnake flag designed by Col. Gadsden, which was frequently used on ships of war as the flag of the commander. In this connection the following reference is of interest:

FEBRUARY 9, 1776.

Col. Gadsden presented to the Congress an elegant standard, such as is to be used by the commander in chief of the American Navy, being a yellow field, with a lively representation of a rattlesnake in the middle in the attitude of going to strike and these words underneath, "Don't tread on me."

Ordered, that the said standard be carefully preserved and suspended in the Congress room.

It should be remembered, however, that this refers to the Provincial Congress of South Carolina and not to the Continental Congress as frequently erroneously stated.

It was this rattlesnake flag, with the addition of a pine tree—the flag carried by the Massachusetts privateers—which an English writer of the period referred to in the following words:

A strange flag latterly appeared in our seas bearing a pine tree with the portraiture of a rattlesnake coiled up at its root, with the daring words, "Don't tread on me." We learned yesterday that the vessels bearing this flag have a sort of a commission from a society of people in Philadelphia calling themselves the Continental Congress.

The "jack" displayed at the bow in conjunction with the Congress colors was probably a flag of thirteen horizontal red and white stripes running the full length of the fly, across which was represented a couchant rattlesnake with the words underneath, "Don't Tread on Me."

The difficulty of identifying the first flag raised is largely due to the uncertainty of what the historians of that period meant when using the phrase "American flag." Some writers speak of the "Cambridge" banner, while others refer to the "Pine Tree" and the "Rattlesnake" emblems as the American flag. To make the designation clear and positive, the flag of the United States is the national ensign adopted June 14, 1777, and all flags used prior to this date were state, colonial, or continental emblems and not the Stars and Stripes. While there is a controversy regarding the initial display of the national flag from a war vessel, there seems to be no doubt but that Jones received the first salute ever given the Stars and Stripes by a foreign power.

No reference to the early history of the flag upon the seas would be complete without a brief allusion to the battle between

the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis* in the evening of September 23, 1779. Thackeray once told a friend that the capture of the *Serapis* by Paul Jones was one of the most extraordinary stories ever recorded in naval history. Without question, that moonlight battle was the greatest exploit in the annals of the sea, and the courage of John Paul Jones and his brave crew, fighting to victory from the decks of a sinking ship, forms one of the brightest pages in our history. Americans will ever pay tribute to the sublime confidence and daring of Paul Jones. Bidding defiance to all human calculations which had predoomed him to defeat, with a foundering ship, half his men dead or dying, when hope and chance seemed irretrievably lost, he fought on and won immortal glory.

All great events seem to invite controversies and it is so with reference to the flag borne by the *Richard*. In 1898 the Government received what was purported to be the original ensign of Jones's old ship. According to the story, which for a time had some support in the popular fancy, the *Richard*, several days before encountering the *Serapis*, captured a British vessel, the *Kitty*, which had formerly been an American ship. Among the crew was one Stafford, who volunteered for service on the *Richard*, and who, it is alleged, during the action with the *Serapis* plunged into the sea and recovered the *Richard's* flag, which had been shot away. When Jones transferred his crew from his sinking ship, it is stated that this sailor rescued the flag and later accompanied Jones to the *Alliance* upon his assuming command of that vessel. When the *Alliance* was sold, the flag was presented to Stafford in recognition of his services. It is alleged that a letter was sent by Joseph Myler, secretary pro tempore of the Marine Committee, to Joseph B. Stafford, presenting to him "Paul Jones's 'Starry Flag' of the *Bon Homme Richard*, which was transferred to the *Alliance*," in recognition of his meritorious services. Beyond this letter there is no positive evidence that this Stafford flag, which has only twelve stars, was the one that waved from the ensign gaff of the *Richard* in the most desperate of all sea conflicts. Those who doubt the authenticity of the Stafford flag, assert that the bunting of which it is made, is of a date subsequent to the battle with the *Serapis*. It is also maintained that Stafford's name does not appear on any ships' papers of that time.

Another story, which has gained considerable vogue, is to the effect that the flag of the *Richard* had been made by two maiden ladies of Philadelphia, who presented it to Capt. Jones shortly after Congress had adopted the Stars and Stripes. It is supposed that this flag, which bore thirteen stripes but only



twelve stars, was flown from the *Ranger* and was afterwards transferred to the *Richard*. There does not seem to be any foundation whatever for this legend.

Buell, in his "Life of Paul Jones," gives a rather fanciful account of this much-disputed flag:

The "unconquered and unstricken" flag that went down with the *Richard* was the same one which the girls of Portsmouth made from slices of their best silk gowns, and presented to Jones to hoist on the *Ranger*, July 4, 1777, and he considered it his personal property or, perhaps, the property of the girls who made it, intrusted to his keeping. On relinquishing command of the *Ranger* in 1778, he kept this flag with him and used it on the *Richard*. It was made by a quilting party according to specifications which Jones furnished. The 13 white stars were cut from the bridal dress in which Helen Seary had been wedded in May, 1777.

This was the first edition of the Stars and Stripes that Europe ever saw; the first to be saluted by the guns of a European naval power; but, far beyond that, and beyond anything, it was the first and last flag that ever went down or ever will go down flying on the ship that conquered and captured the ship that sunk her.

When Jones returned to this country in February, 1781, he found Miss Langdon, of the "quilting party," a guest of the Ross family, whose house was always his home in Philadelphia. By way of apology he explained to her that his most ardent desire had been to bring that flag home to America, with all its glories, and give it back untarnished into the fair hands that had given it to him nearly four years before. "But, Miss Mary," he said, "I couldn't bear to strip it from the poor old ship in her last agony, nor could I deny to my dead on her decks, who had given their lives to keep it flying, the glory of taking it with them."

"You did exactly right, Commodore," exclaimed Miss Langdon: "that flag is just where we all wish it to be—flying at the bottom of the sea over the only ship that ever sunk in victory!"

I fear sentiment has been interwoven with history in this interesting story, for while the records are very complete in describing the battle, their reference to the colors is most meager. In Jones's memoirs, compiled from papers in the possession of his niece, Mrs. Taylor, there is a reference stating that few of the personal effects of the officers were saved. In the journal prepared by Jones for the King of France, he speaks of everything going down with the ship except signal flags. As the national flag is never used as a signal in the sense in which Jones referred to the signal flags which were saved, Buell evidently assumed that the Stars and Stripes were left flying at the peak when the *Richard* sank beneath the waves.

In July, 1905, Scribner's Magazine published the "Narrative of John Kilby," quarter gunner of the *Richard*. In this narrative, written in 1810, the sinking of the *Richard* is described as follows:

O Heavens! It was enough to bring tears from the most unthinking man. She went down head foremost with all sails set—studding sails, 32539—18061

top-gallant sails, royals, skyscrapers, and every sail that could be put on a ship—jack, pennant, and that beautiful ensign that she so gallantly wore while in action and when she conquered.

It has been asserted that Jones referred to the loss of the flag in his report of the engagement to Congress, but, unfortunately, the records do not disclose this fact. The several letters written by the great commander to numerous friends describing the battle, are silent on the flag episode. Yet Mr. Buell states that Jones made a report in which he said:

No one was now left aboard the *Richard* but her dead. To them I gave the good old ship for their coffin, and in her they found a sublime sepulcher. She rolled heavily in the long swell; her gun deck, awash to the port sills, settled slowly by the head and sank peacefully in about 40 fathoms.

The ensign gaff, shot away in action, had been fished and put in place soon after firing ceased, and our torn and tattered flag was left flying when we abandoned her. As she plunged down by the head at the last, her taffrail momentarily rose in the air; so the very last vestige mortal eyes ever saw of the *Bon Homme Richard* was the defiant waving of her unconquered and unstricken flag as she went down. And, as I had given them the good old ship for their sepulcher, I now bequeathed to my immortal dead the flag they had so desperately defended, for their winding sheet.

For the sake of history and in honor of the memory of the great sailor, let us hope that Buell based his eloquent and pathetic account of the sinking of the *Bon Homme Richard* upon substantial grounds.

The flag as originally adopted remained unchanged until May 1, 1795. By this time two more States, Vermont and Kentucky, had been admitted into the Union, and a change in the flag was made necessary. Not foreseeing the growth of the flag in the addition of both a stripe and a star for each new State, Congress on January 13, 1794, enacted—

That from and after the 1st day of May, 1795, the flag of the United States be 15 stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be 15 stars, white in a blue field.

In the first flag, the stars were evidently arranged in a circle, at least in one instance, but this custom was not generally adopted. At Annapolis, there is preserved the flag of the Third Maryland Regiment, with a union showing twelve stars in a circle, surrounding one in the center. In the flag of fifteen stripes the stars were placed in three parallel rows of five stars each, and this flag was the national banner from 1795 to 1818, during which period occurred the War of 1812. It was this flag waving over Fort McHenry that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the "Star-Spangled Banner."

By 1818 five additional States—Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana and Mississippi—had been admitted into the Union

and therefore truly to represent the Union, a further change in the flag was demanded. After considerable discussion in Congress on the subject, the act of April 4, 1818, was passed, which provided:

First. That from and after the 4th of July next the flag of the United States be 13 horizontal stripes, alternate red and white; that the union have 20 stars, white in a blue field.

Second. That on the admission of every new State into the Union 1 star be added to the union of the flag and that such addition shall take effect on the 4th of July next succeeding such admission.

To Hon. Peter H. Wendover, a Member from New York, belongs the credit of pressing it to final passage. The return to the thirteen stripes of the 1777 flag, was due largely to the fact that it would not be practicable to continue adding a stripe for each new State, for a further increase in the number of stripes would have made the width of the flag disproportionate to its length, unless the stripes were narrowed, and this would have impaired its distinctness. Upon the suggestion of Capt. Reid, of the Navy, who had suggested the return to the thirteen stripes, the stars were to be arranged in the form of one great star in the center of the union. This design, however, did not meet with favor, and the stars were arranged in rows. A newspaper of the times said:

By this regulation the 13 stripes will represent the number of States whose valor and resources originally effected American independence, and the additional stars will mark the increase of the United States since the establishment of the Constitution.

No act has since been passed by Congress altering the general design of the flag and it is the same as originally adopted except for the increase in the number of stars in the union. In the War with Mexico the flag displayed twenty-nine stars in its union; during the Civil War, thirty-five; during the Spanish-American War, forty-five stars; and since July 4, 1912, forty-eight stars. Congress has never legislated upon the arrangement of the stars in the union and in consequence there has been a lack of uniformity in the matter, although the early confusion has now disappeared and in the absence of direct legislation an agreement has been reached between the Navy and War Departments on the subject. The present arrangement of the stars is in six horizontal rows of eight stars each.

The term "Old Glory" was evidently first applied to the flag by William Driver in 1831, a skipper from Salem, Mass., who was at that time in command of the brig, *Charles Doggett*. It is related, that as he was about to sail for the South Seas a party of friends presented him with the flag and when it was broken from the gaff the captain christened it "Old Glory." In 1837 the captain removed to Nashville, Tenn., taking with him Old

Glory, which he afterwards displayed on all public occasions. His pronounced Union sentiments frequently led him into trouble with his southern neighbors and during the war he was obliged to conceal the flag in the coverlet of his bed. In 1862 when a detachment of Buell's army occupied the city, Capt. Driver, with his own hands, hoisted Old Glory over the capitol building.

The history of the flag from this time seems clouded in uncertainty, and I will refer briefly to three statements that have been made in regard to it. The Rev. Henry N. Couden, chaplain of the House, a veteran of the Sixth Ohio Volunteer Infantry, feels confident that the Old Glory flag no longer exists. The respect and veneration in which Dr. Couden is held by every Member of Congress, entitles his contribution to the history of this famous flag to be accepted as evidence that the flag was accidentally destroyed. He states that in February, 1862, his regiment had been ordered to relieve Grant at Donelson, but while they were on the transports word came that the fort had surrendered. They were then ordered to Nashville, where on February 25 they took part in the ceremonies incident to the raising of the Stars and Stripes over the capitol. The next day Capt. Driver obtained Col. Anderson's permission to hoist Old Glory to the mast and a squad of soldiers were detached to procure the flag, which the captain with his own hands raised over the building. The captain then presented the flag to the Sixth Ohio and this regiment fought under Old Glory at Shiloh and Stone River. In keeping it aloft in the Battle of Stone River six men were shot down but Old Glory was kept waving and did not touch the ground. For about a year Old Glory, the name having then been adopted by other regiments, was the regimental flag of the Sixth Ohio. For safe-keeping the flag after sunset each day was deposited in one of the quartermaster's wagons, but one night some of the animals, having broken loose, destroyed the flag. Dr. Couden's statement is amply verified, if any verification be necessary, by the following paragraph taken from Hananoford's "History of the Sixth Ohio Regiment":

The flag, with whose history so many interesting associations were connected, was presented to the Sixth Ohio, by which it was regarded as a most precious souvenir. It passed safely through all the campaigns of the regiment, until October, 1863, when Fred Schnell's mules discovered it one night where it was stowed away in the headquarters' wagon and before morning had eaten Old Glory up, leaving only a few shreds to tell the sacrilegious tale.

In order to make the record complete, I insert extracts from a letter sent me by the Essex Institute, of Salem, Mass., which claims it has in its possession the original flag. The secretary states that the original Old Glory was presented to the institute



by a niece of Capt. Driver, who sent with the flag the following letter, written by the captain himself:

NASHVILLE, TENN., *September 25, 1880.*

MY DEAR NIECE: I send you this my oldest flag. It has been everywhere, my companion around the world, waved at Pitcairn, and among the icebergs of Cape Horn. This is my Old Glory, like me neglected and worn out, but there is no stain upon it. I kept it for my winding sheet, a sailor's whim, and now feeling like old Mordecai at the gate, I give it to you as a proof of the kindness and reward a patriot receives at the hand of a soon-to-be-broken-up Government.

The secretary of the institute then closes his letter with this statement:

The traditional story in relation to the flag eaten by the mule has also come down to us but is said to refer to another flag. Let me say this also in this connection, that a descendant of Capt. Driver, living in the far West, I think Nevada, also has a flag of Capt. Driver's, which she claims to be the original. But in view of the evidence of this letter, which came to us with our flag, there can be no doubt as to the facts in the case.

The above statements are refuted by Mrs. Mary Roland, of Nevada, a daughter of Capt. Driver, who, under date of August 15, 1913, stated that:

The original flag Old Glory has never been out of the possession of our family. This flag, my father named Old Glory, he gave me in July, 1873, and it has remained in my possession ever since.

Mrs. Roland asserts that when her father, in 1880, asked her to send him Old Glory she sent him, without his knowledge, another flag and that it was this substitute flag and not Old Glory which was deposited by his niece in the Essex Institute shortly after the captain's death.

While it would seem that the Stars and Stripes were carried in battle in many of the later campaigns of the Revolution, it is evident that the national ensign was not generally used by troops until the Mexican War. In reference to its use by regiments in the field, I quote from a statement made by the Smithsonian Institution:

It seems, that for many years, the Army did not carry the Stars and Stripes in battle, though it had been in general use as a garrison flag. The land forces, during this period and before, carried what was known as national colors or standards of blue, with the coat of arms of the United States, comprising an eagle surmounted by a number of stars emblazoned thereon, with the designation of the body of troops. In 1834 War Department regulations gave the Artillery the right to carry the Stars and Stripes. The Infantry and Cavalry still used the national standards, which remained the colors of the Infantry until 1841 and of the Cavalry until 1887, when that branch of the Army was ordered to carry the Stars and Stripes. From its adoption in 1777, however, naval vessels universally displayed the national flag.

Mr. Gherardi Davis, in his monumental work, "The Colors of the United States Army," says:

After the adoption by Congress in June, 1777, of the United States flag, the Stars and Stripes appear to have been very generally used at sea. But this flag does not seem to have been adopted generally by the Army.

Mr. R. C. Ballard Thruston, of Louisville, also states—

that the flags or colors made by the War Department for the Army were in the hands of the field commissary stores but not distributed till March, 1783. The war was then over. So we now know that the entire Revolutionary War was fought through without the Army being furnished any flags by the Government. Those they did use were made by the ladies for some company, battalion, or officer.

Sergt. Schopper, in charge of the ordnance museum at West Point, is of the opinion that—

The Stars and Stripes were not commonly carried by troops during the Revolution; and in the few isolated cases where it is claimed that they were, they were privately made and not issued by the Board of War.

The official correspondence of Gen. Washington shows that it was not until several years after the adoption of the Stars and Stripes, that the War Board obtained material to make national colors for the Army "as variant from the marine flag."

While this evidence shows that the Government did not furnish the national ensign to troops in the field, it does not prove that the Stars and Stripes were not displayed, for it is evident that flags privately made were presented to different companies, which, while not official, were true representations of the national flag. It seems only reasonable to conclude, that at many of the most important events in the closing years of the Revolution, the Stars and Stripes cheered our troops to victory.

While we have but one flag for use on sea, as well as land, by merchant ships and men-of-war alike, Congress very early in our history adopted a special flag for the Revenue-Cutter Service consisting of sixteen perpendicular stripes, alternately red and white. The union is white, on which is depicted in blue the national coat of arms—the eagle surmounted by a half circle of thirteen stars. The large number of stripes is accounted for by the fact, that at the time the "ensign and pendant" of the Revenue-Cutter Service was established, in 1799, there were sixteen States in the Union and the arrangement has never been altered. Under the act of January 28, 1915, the Life-Saving Service and the Revenue-Cutter Service were combined under the title United States Coast Guard, and the revenue flag adopted as a distinguishing flag, to be flown from the foretruck or pennant staff.

The union jack, commonly called the "jack," consists of the union of the national flag—a blue field with forty-eight white

stars arranged in six parallel rows of eight stars each. The Navy regulations specify that "when at anchor the union jack shall be flown from the jack staff from morning colors to evening colors." The jack is used also as a signal for a pilot and to denote the session of a court-martial. "When a diplomatic official of the United States of and above the rank of chargé d'affaires pays an official visit afloat, the union jack shall be carried on a staff at the bow."

In addition to these flags, there is a flag for the President and several of the departmental heads, as well as for special divisions of the Government service.

In closing this fragmentary and I fear, somewhat imperfect history of the flag, I want to quote from the late Henry Ward Beecher:

A thoughtful mind, when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag but the nation itself; and whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag the government, the principles, the truth, the history, that belong to the nation that sets it forth. The stars upon it were to the pining nations like the bright morning stars of God, and the stripes upon it were beams of morning light. As at early dawn the stars shine forth even while it grows light, and then as the sun advances that light breaks into banks and streaming lines of color, the glowing red and intense white striving together and ribbing the horizon with bars, effulgent, so, on the American flag, stars and beams of many-colored light shine out together. And wherever this flag comes and men behold it, they see in its sacred emblazonry no ramping lion and no fierce eagle, no embattled castles or insignia of imperial authority: they see the symbols of light. It is the banner of Dawn.

It has eloquently been said:

Let us then twine each thread of the glorious tissue of our country's flag about our heartstrings; and looking upon our homes and catching the spirit that breathes upon us from the battle fields of our fathers, let us resolve, come weal or woe, we will, in life and in death, now and forever, stand by the Stars and Stripes. They have been unfurled from the snows of Canada to the plains of New Orleans, in the halls of the Montezumas and amid the solitude of every sea; and everywhere, as the luminous symbol of resistless and beneficent power, they have led the brave to victory and to glory. They have floated over our cradles: let it be our prayer and our struggle that they shall float over our graves.

In silent grandeur the flag waves over the tombs of the dead, over the homes of the living; the emblem of truth and righteousness, inspiring men's hearts on the land and on the sea with faith and hope, the symbol of the power, the unity and the purpose of our Republic, now and for evermore.

At the conclusion of the address "in honor of the flag and in honor of the day which has been set apart for that purpose," the House adjourned.

## ADDENDUM.

## THE FLAG.

Stars of the early dawning, set in a field of blue;  
 Stripes of the sunrise splendor, crimson and white of hue;  
 Flag of our father's fathers born on the field of strife,  
 Phoenix of fiery battle risen from human life;  
 Given for God and freedom, sacred, indeed, the trust  
 Left by the countless thousands returned to the silent dust.

Flag of a mighty nation waving aloft unfurled;  
 Kissed by the sun of heaven, caressed by the winds o' the world;  
 Greater than kingly power, greater than all mankind;  
 Conceived in the need of the hour, inspired by the Master Mind;  
 Over the living children, over the laureled grave,  
 Streaming on high in the cloudless sky, banner our fathers gave.

Flag of a new-born era, token of every right;  
 Wrung from a tyrant power, unawed by a tyrant's might;  
 Facing again the menace outflung from a foreign shore,  
 Meeting again the challenge as met in the years before;  
 Under thy spangled folds thy children await to give  
 All that they have or are, that the flag they love shall live.

CHARLES G. CRELLIN.

## FLAG ETIQUETTE.

The flag circular issued by the War Department contains much valuable information:

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington.*

Many inquiries concerning the proper method of displaying, hanging, and saluting the United States flag are being received in the War Department, with the evident object of securing some authoritative statement relating to the subject.

In this connection it should be remarked, that while it is within the province of the War Department to prescribe rules and regulations governing the matter in question for observance within the Army, yet it is beyond its province to prescribe any such rules or regulations for the guidance of civilians or to undertake to decide questions concerning the subject that are presented by civilians.

There is no Federal law now in force pertaining to the manner of displaying, hanging, or saluting the United States flag or prescribing any ceremonies that should be observed in connection therewith. In fact there are but two Federal laws on the statute books that have any bearing upon this subject, one the act of Congress approved February 20, 1905 (33 Stat. L. 725), providing that a trade-mark can not be registered which consists of or comprises inter alia, "the flag, coat of arms, or other insignia of the United States, or any simulation thereof," and the other the act of Congress approved February 8, 1917 (Public, No. 305, 64th Cong.), providing certain penalties for the desecration, mutilation, or improper use of the flag within the District of Columbia. Several States of the Union have enacted laws which have more or less bearing upon the general subject and it seems probable that many counties and municipalities have also passed ordinances concerning the matter, to govern action within their own jurisdiction.

Warning against desecration of the American flag by aliens has been issued by the Department of Justice, which has sent the following notice to Federal attorneys and marshals:

32539—18061



"Any alien enemy tearing down, mutilating, abusing, or desecrating the United States flag in any way will be regarded as a danger to the public peace or safety within the meaning of regulation 12 of the proclamation of the President issued April 6, 1917, and will be subject to summary arrest and punishment."

It is the practice in the Army, each day in the year, to hoist the flag briskly at sunrise, irrespective of the condition of the weather and to lower it slowly and ceremoniously at sunset, indicating the commencement and cessation of the activities of the day and to display it at half staff on Memorial Day (May 30) from sunrise until noon and at full staff from noon until sunset, and also on other days specially designated for that purpose by the proper authority, the flag always being first hoisted to the top of the staff before being lowered to the half-staff position.

There has been some question among civilians concerning the exact location of a flag hung at "half staff." Theoretically, the flag is always hung on a separate staff, much shorter than the staffs usually erected on buildings, and as a consequence a flag hung at half staff would be located much higher on the ordinary flag staff than under the present practice but still the custom of placing the half-staffed flag in about the center of the flagpole, whatever its length may be, is rather generally observed throughout the country and this department sees no real objection to this custom.

Considerable discussion has arisen throughout the country concerning the proper manner of hanging and displaying the flag for decorative purposes. As already stated, there is no Federal law governing the subject, and individual opinion differs as to the procedure that should or should not be followed. It has been suggested that as far as possible the hanging of the flag should be restricted to suspending it from a flagpole, in the regular way and not to displaying it otherwise; that for purposes of decoration only the national colors should be arranged in the form of bunting and not used in the form of the flag; that if it is nevertheless the desire to use the flag for decorative purposes it should always be hung flat whether on the inside or the outside of buildings, with the union to the north or east, so that there will be a general uniformity in the position of the union of each flag displayed; that the flag should rarely be displayed in a horizontal position or laid flat; that under no circumstances should it be hung where it can easily be contaminated or soiled, or be draped over chairs or benches to be used for seating purposes, and that no object or emblem of any kind should be placed above or upon it. This department sees no objection to flying the flag at night on civilian property provided it is not so flown for advertising purposes.

It is becoming the practice throughout the country among civilians to display the national flag on all patriotic occasions, especially on the following days:

Lincoln's Birthday, February 12.

Washington's Birthday, February 22.

Mothers' Day, second Sunday in May.

Memorial Day, May 30.

Flag Day, June 14.

Independence Day, July 4.

In certain localities, other special days are observed in the same manner.

It seems to be appropriate that where several flags or emblems are displayed on a pole or otherwise the United States flag should always be hoisted first and hung or displayed at the top; that in any parade

the United States flag should always have the place of honor and that the flag should never be hung or displayed with the union down, except as a signal of distress at sea.

Existing regulations governing the Army provide, that when officers and enlisted men pass the national flag, not encased, they will render honors as follows: If in civilian dress and covered, they will uncover, holding the headdress opposite the left shoulder with the right hand; if uncovered, they will salute with the right-hand salute. A flag unfurled and hung in a room in which officers or enlisted men of the Army are present, will be saluted by them the first time they may have occasion to pass it, but not thereafter. The hand salute is as follows:

"Raise the right hand smartly till the tip of the forefinger touches the lower part of the headdress above the right eye, thumb and fingers extended and joined, palm to left, forearm inclined to about 45°, hand and wrist straight; at the same time look toward the person saluted.

"Drop the arm smartly to the side."

No anthem, hymn, or musical air has been recognized by any Federal law as the national anthem, hymn, or air, but Army and Navy regulations provide that the musical composition familiarly known as the Star-Spangled Banner, shall be designated as the national air of the United States of America. It should be stated, however, that these regulations are binding only upon the personnel of the military and naval service.

Whenever the national air is played at any place where persons belonging to the military or naval service are present, all officers and enlisted men not in formation are required to stand at attention, facing toward the music, excepting when the flag is being lowered at sunset, on which occasion they are required to face toward the flag. If in civilian dress and uncovered, they are required to stand and salute at the first note of the air, retaining the position of salute until the last note of the air is played. If in civilian dress and covered, they are required to stand and uncover at the first note of the air, holding the headdress opposite the left shoulder until the last note is played, excepting in inclement weather, when the headdress may be held slightly raised. The custom of rising and remaining standing and uncovered while the Star-Spangled Banner is being played is growing in favor among civilians.

Old or worn-out flags should not be used either for banners or for any secondary purpose. When a flag is in such a condition, that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, it should not be cast aside nor used in any way that might be viewed as disrespectful to the national colors, but should be destroyed as a whole, privately, preferably by burning or by some other method lacking in any suggestion of irreverence or disrespect due the emblem representing our country.

It should be borne in mind that the views set forth in this circular are merely suggestive and that it is not the intention of the department to give them out as authoritative.

APRIL 14, 1917.

H. P. McCAIN,  
*The Adjutant General.*

As there has been much controversy as to the correct method of hanging the flag when used for decorative purposes, I will state that many patriotic societies contend, that when the flag is fastened to a wall or hung on the side of a building or platform, the union, when the stripes are horizontal, should be at

the upper left-hand corner and when vertical at the upper right-hand corner, as seen by the observer.

The following is taken from the Navy Regulations:

The national ensign on board a ship of the Navy at anchor shall be hoisted at 8 a. m. and kept flying until sunset. Whenever a ship comes to anchor or gets under way, if there is sufficient light for the ensign to be seen, it shall be hoisted, although earlier or later than the time specified. The national ensign shall be displayed on shore from 8 a. m. to sunset at every shore station under the jurisdiction of the Navy Department.

Whenever the national anthem is played on board a vessel of the Navy, at a naval station, or at any place where persons belonging to the naval service are present, all officers and enlisted men not in formation, shall stand at attention, facing toward the music (except at colors, when they shall face the colors). If in uniform, covered or uncovered, or in civilian clothes, uncovered, they shall salute at the first note of the anthem, retaining the position of salute until the last note of the anthem. If not in uniform and covered, they shall uncover at the first note of the anthem, holding the headdress opposite the left shoulder and so remain until the last note of the anthem, except that in inclement weather the headdress may be slightly raised. The same marks of respect prescribed for observance during the playing of the national anthem of the United States shall be shown toward the national anthem of any other country, when played on official occasions. The playing of the national anthem of the United States or of any other country, as a part of a medley is prohibited.

The following ceremonies shall be observed at "colors" on board ships in commission; at morning "colors," the band shall play the national anthem, at the beginning of which the ensign shall be started up and hoisted smartly to the peak or truck. All officers and men shall face the ensign and stand at attention and the guard of the day and sentries under arms shall come to the position of "present," while the national anthem is being played.

The same ceremonies shall be observed at sunset "colors," the ensign being started from the peak or truck at the beginning of the national anthem. (These ceremonies are omitted at sea.) At naval stations the same ceremonies shall be observed as closely as possible.

When at anchor in a foreign port, or when a foreign naval vessel is at anchor in an American port, the same honors shall be rendered at "colors" to the foreign ensign, the band playing the appropriate national foreign air immediately after the rendition of our national anthem.

In order to show proper respect for the flag the following ceremony should be observed:

At "morning and evening colors" civilian spectators should stand at "attention" and uncover during the playing of the "Star-Spangled Banner." \* \* \* The flag should never be allowed to touch the ground and should never be raised or lowered by any mechanical appliance or rolled up and hoisted to the staff before unfurling.

When the national colors are passing on parade, or in review, the spectator should, if walking, halt and if sitting, arise and stand at attention and uncover.

Whenever the "Star-Spangled Banner" is being played or sung, all persons within hearing should rise and stand uncovered during its rendition.

When the National and State or other flags fly together the national flag should be on the right.

When the flag is flown at half staff as a sign of mourning, it should be hoisted to full staff at the conclusion of the funeral.

The national salute is twenty-one guns. It is also the salute to a national flag. The salute to the Union, commemorative of the Declaration of Independence and consisting of one gun for each State, is fired at noon on July 4 at every Army post provided with suitable artillery. (Army Regulations.) No flag or emblem of any kind should ever be displayed above the Stars and Stripes. In the Navy an exception is made when religious services are being held on board ship. At this time the church pennant is flown above the flag.

When flags are used in unveiling a statue or monument they should not be allowed to fall to the ground, but should be carried aloft to wave out, forming a distinctive feature during the remainder of the ceremony.

Officially over only three buildings does the flag fly continuously, day and night—the National Capitol at Washington (east and west fronts) and over the adjacent office buildings of the Senate and House of Representatives.

There has lately come into use a service flag, upon which stars are displayed in honor of those in the service of their country.

#### PERSONAL SALUTES.

	Guns.
The President of the United States.....	21
The sovereign or chief magistrate of a foreign country.....	21
An ex-President of the United States.....	21
The Vice President.....	19
Ambassadors.....	19
Members of the Cabinet.....	19
Governors of States, the Chief Justice and Speaker of the House of Representatives.....	17

#### ORAL FLAG SALUTE IN SCHOOLS.

Primary department: "We give our heads and our hearts to God and our country; one country, one language, one flag."

Advanced pupils: "I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the Republic for which it stands; one Nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

#### SIZE OF FLAGS.

By Executive order promulgated May 29, 1916, it was ordered that national flags and union jacks for all departments of the Government, with the exception that the colors carried by troops shall be the sizes prescribed for the military service, shall conform to the following proportions:

Hoist (width) of flag.....	1
Fly (length) of flag.....	1.9
Hoist (width) of union.....	7-12
Fly (length) of union.....	.76
Width of each stripe.....	1-13



## THE FLAG AND NEW YORK.

New York may justly be proud of the part she has conspicuously played in the history of the flag. The great Empire State, with her mighty commerce, her great agricultural interests, her business enterprises, her financial resources and her maritime industries, unequaled by any State in the Union, salutes her sister Commonwealths and pledges her allegiance to the flag which unites all the States—each one an empire, and the whole the most magnificent and forward cluster of civil polities the world has ever known.

In every crisis which has confronted the Nation, the sons of New York have responded nobly to the call of duty and of country. Both before and since the adoption of her State constitution, on April 20, 1777, stirring scenes have been enacted on her soil. In all the Indian wars, New York, the home of the famous Iroquois, bore the brunt of those deadly conflicts. During the struggle for independence our State gave freely of her men and her treasure and her records are replete with valorous incidents in the cause of liberty and freedom.

On August 3, 1777, the Stars and Stripes were raised over Fort Stanwix and two months later, on October 17, they waved in triumph over Burgoyne, when he surrendered his army at the decisive Battle of Saratoga. On July 16, 1779, "Mad" Anthony Wayne captured Stony Point in one of the most brilliant victories of the war and on November 25, 1783, the British evacuated New York and the noble Hudson again flowed unvexed to the sea.

At Poughkeepsie on July 26, 1788, the Federal Constitution was ratified. From 1785 to 1793 New York was the national capital and here, on the 30th of April, 1789, on the balcony of Federal Hall, George Washington took the oath of office as the first President of the United States. In the War of 1812, owing to her proximity to Canada, New York bore her full share of the burden of the conflict and played a conspicuous part in the triumphs of the flag. When the call came in 1861 to preserve the Union, New York responded with all her splendid courage and determination, sending to the front 448,850 soldiers, a total which, by including the 18,197, who paid commutation, was swelled to 467,047, over one-sixth of the Union Army. To show her patriotism in providing men to uphold the supremacy of the Stars and Stripes, she expended in bounties the huge sum of \$86,629,000. In the Spanish War her sons charged at San Juan and fought in the jungles of the far-away, Philippines and in the war against Germany the Empire State will send her

full quota to the trenches of Europe and wherever duty calls, whenever bravery and courage is demanded, whether it be charging across the deadly field of "no man's land" or in the air or under the sea, there you will find the men from the Empire State.

New York recognizes the importance of inculcating into the minds and the hearts of her children a noble veneration for the flag of the Nation and has enacted laws to foster their love and inspire their patriotism.

Our education laws provide that—

It shall be the duty of the school authorities of every public school in the several cities and school districts of the State to purchase a United States flag, flagstaff and the necessary appliances therefor, and to display such flag upon or near the public-school building during school hours and at such other times as such school authorities may direct.

It shall be the duty of the commissioner of education to prepare for the use of the public schools of the State, a program providing for a salute to the flag and such other patriotic exercises as may be deemed by him to be expedient under such regulations and instructions as may best meet the varied requirements of the different grades in such schools.

It shall also be his duty to make special provision for the observance in the public schools of Lincoln's birthday, Washington's birthday, Memorial Day and Flag Day, and such other legal holidays of like character as may be hereafter designated by law when the legislature makes an appropriation therefor.

In guarding the national flag as well as our own emblem from desecration, no State has been more careful than our own great Commonwealth. Our laws are explicit and provide severe penalties for the improper use of official flags.

On March 15, 1917, we enacted a law making it a misdemeanor for any person to place any sort of an advertisement, word, figure, mark, or picture of any nature upon the flag of the United States, or to "publicly mutilate, deface, defile, or defy, trample upon or cast contempt upon" the national flag or any picture or representation of it.

#### STATE FLAG AND COAT OF ARMS.

The following history of the New York State flag has been compiled by Hon. James A. Holden, State historian, to whom I am indebted for its publication:

Up to 1896 there had been nothing placed in the statutory civil laws so far as I have been able to discover in the time at my disposal relating to a State flag, either as to color or design. In fact, in the Laws of 1845, chapter 98, "An act for the erection of a flagstaff on the capitol," passed April 26 of that year, this flagstaff was to be erected "on the capitol for the purpose of displaying thereon, the American flag during the daily sessions of the legislature and on public occasions and to procure a suitable flag for that purpose" (pp. 81-82).

32539—18061

This would show that at that time New York had no State flag recognized as such.

However, in the "General regulations for the military forces of the State of New York" (Albany, 1858), issued by the adjutant general of the State as "General Order No. 30," I find in article 34, page 129, "the State flag is made of white bunting, 12 feet fly by 10 feet hoist, bearing in the center the arms of the State of New York. The regimental colors at that time were to be of yellow silk for the artillery and of blue silk for the infantry and rifle regiments, all bearing the arms of the State of New York.

At this time the standards of the mounted regiments likewise bore the arms of the State of New York, embroidered in silk on a blue ground (p. 130).

It should be borne in mind, that there is a distinction made in military rules and regulations between the words "flags," "colors," and "standards," as follows: "By 'flag' is meant the emblem displayed from a flagstaff. By 'colors' are meant the National and State flags carried by foot troops. By 'standards' are meant the National and State flags carried by mounted troops."

In this connection we may note, that one of the original sources from which the present coat of arms of the State of New York was derived was the flag borne by the Third New York Regiment, Col. Peter Gansevoort, jr., commanding and was used by that regiment during the Revolutionary War. This flag is said to have been of "dark blue silk and about seven feet square."

It is stated by the late H. A. Homes, the then State librarian, that "in 1871 the arms were painted on blue silk on regimental flags of 12 feet by 10, \* \* \* but in 1873 upon the new flag of white bunting."

It is indicated that some time between the time of the Civil War and 1878 the State flag, at least so far as it was made a State flag by military usage, had been changed from white to blue and then back again, inasmuch as I find that in the General Regulations for Military Forces of the State of New York for 1865, General Orders, No. 23, article 34, section 717, it is prescribed that "The State flag is made of white bunting, 12 feet fly by 10 feet hoist, bearing in the center the arms of the State of New York." The regimental colors and standards were to be of blue silk for infantry and rifle regiments and for mounted regiments and of yellow silk for the artillery.

The same language is used in the General Regulations for the Military Forces of the State of New York, for 1876, article 35, section 643, viz, "The State flag is made of white bunting, 12 feet fly by 10 feet hoist, bearing in the center the arms of the State of New York." State regimental standards and colors were all of blue, however, at this time.

The first attempt to establish a legal State flag that I have as yet discovered, was made in 1896. At that time by chapter 229 of the laws of that year it was prescribed that "The State flag is hereby declared to be buff, charged with the arms of the State in the colors as described in the blazon of this section."

The State flag continued to be buff in color until 1901, when, at the suggestion and through the work and research of the then State historian, Hon. Hugh Hastings, legislation was secured and by chapter 229 of the laws of 1901 the color of the State flag was changed from buff to blue, and it has remained blue to the present time.

In 1883, by chapter 349, laws of that year, a superintendent of buildings was authorized. Among the other duties imposed upon him was that of seeing that "During the hours when the legislature is in session

session the State flag having the arms of the State, shall be displayed from the capitol, together with the flag of the United States."

The formality of displaying the State flag is also carried out whenever the board of regents of the University of the State of New York is in session, in the Education Building, the board being a coordinate branch of the State government.

On formal occasions, therefore, the State flag is always to be seen displayed from the official buildings here in Albany.

#### COAT OF ARMS.

The coat of arms of our State, dating from March 16, 1778, is not surpassed in beauty by the insignia of any other State. Two figures support a shield. On the right is the blue-robed figure of liberty, her flowing hair decorated with a coronet of pearls. A staff surmounted by a Phrygian cap is supported by her right hand, while beneath her feet rests a royal crown. On the left of the shield is the golden-robed figure of justice, blind-folded, holding in her right hand a sword and in the left, the scales of justice. On the shield are depicted three mountains, with the sun rising behind them. In the foreground is an arm of the sea, upon which two vessels are sailing—a ship and a sloop. Above the shield is a globe, showing the continent and the oceans. Crowning all is an American eagle with outspread wings. On a scroll beneath the shield is inscribed the motto "Excelsior."

32539—18061



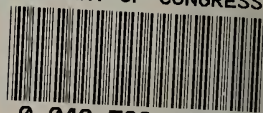








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